



Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

For Immediate Release
Dec. 10, 2007

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Take Advantage Of Medicare Open Enrollment through December 31

*Eligible Veterans, Family Members and Others Enroll or Change
Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit*

(FRANKFORT, KY, December 10, 2007) The Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs strongly encourages veterans and all others 65 years or older to enroll in or make changes to their Medicare prescription drug coverage before January 1.

“This is an important benefit for our veterans and all seniors,” said David Worley, Executive Director of the Office of Kentucky Veterans Centers. “You can enroll or change your coverage only during this short period of time each year, and we don’t want anyone to miss the opportunity.”

If you are sixty-five years or older, right now through December 31, 2007, Medicare eligible seniors are permitted to enroll-in or make changes to their prescription drug coverage through Medicare Part D.

This year, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) have reported that the average monthly premium for our nation's seniors will be \$25. This is significantly lower the \$41 average premium that was originally projected for 2008. It is estimated that 87% of seniors who have a stand-alone prescription drug benefit will pay either the same or a lower premium in 2008

than they are currently. This is great news for Kentucky's seniors and a testament to the fact that the Medicare prescription drug benefit is achieving its intended goal of making prescriptions more affordable.

Earlier this year, a nationwide poll reported that over eighty percent of seniors are happy with their prescription drug coverage. On average, seniors are saving \$1,100 annually on prescription medications. However, if you are unsatisfied with your plan or your prescription drug needs have changed, there are many resources available to assist you. CMS recently distributed its handbook, "Medicare and You", to assist seniors looking to make a change for the upcoming year. The handbook serves as a valuable tool offering information to seniors about the 2008 costs, plan options and scope of benefits. The "Medicare and You" handbook is available online by visiting: <http://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/10050.pdf>.

Additionally, the Kentucky State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) provides counseling and information to seniors and their families about Medicare in the Commonwealth. SHIP can assist seniors with understanding their coverage, comparing plans, filling out prescription drug discount program applications and applying for additional benefits. To speak with a SHIP representative toll-free, seniors can call (877) 293-7447.

If you know someone sixty-five or older, or you are the caregiver for someone who qualifies for Medicare, KDVA encourages you to talk with them about their current prescription drug benefit and ensure that their needs are being met. There are many resources out there to assist seniors with choosing a plan that fits their needs.